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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 7, 2005

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Available at: www.usdoj.gov/usao/cae/home*

**SHERIFF'S EMPLOYEE CHARGED WITH MAKING
FALSE STATEMENTS TO THE FBI**

Dispatcher Compromised Drug-Trafficking Investigation

FRESNO--United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today that a federal grand jury returned a one-count indictment, unsealed late yesterday, charging SYLVIA BAZALDUA SINGH, 36, of Bakersfield, California, with making false statements to special agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

This case is the product of an extensive/joint investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Kern County Sheriff's Office.

According to Assistant United States Attorney Kathleen A. Servatius, who is prosecuting the case, the indictment alleges that the FBI and South Valley High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) Task Force postponed a planned law enforcement drug-trafficking operation, involving the execution of several arrest and search warrants in the Bakersfield and Los Angeles area, after learning that the planned operation was a matter of public knowledge. The FBI commenced an investigation to determine how the information became public. The indictment further alleges that agents of the FBI interviewed SINGH, employed as a Communication Supervisor with the Kern County Sheriff's Office, on May 3, 2005. During the interview, SINGH admitted that she attended a supervisor's meeting during which she was briefed on the planned law enforcement operation. The indictment charges that SINGH made false statements to the interviewing agents when she told them that she did not discuss the drug arrests and search warrant executions planned for April 14, 2005.

According to United States Attorney Scott, "The integrity of the justice system requires that individuals in sensitive law enforcement positions maintain the confidentiality of the information they learn in the course of their employment. Similarly, the investigative process is thwarted when individuals attempt to deceive federal agents during their investigation."

The charges are only allegations and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

If convicted, the maximum penalty under federal law for the offense of making false statements is five years imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine.

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